



October 19, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to you as elected officials in Orange County regarding the recent oil spill which has severely damaged our coastline.

On October 3, 2021, Rep. Michelle Steel (CA-48) sent you a Major Disaster Declaration request to support the emergency response to the oil spill off the coast of Huntington Beach. On October 4, 2021 she requested support for this request from Governor Gavin Newsom. Later that day, Governor Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency in Orange County to assist in responding to the spill. On October 5, 2021, the Orange County Board of Supervisors declared a countywide state of emergency to enable local emergency resources. This event has triggered major health concerns, has serious effects on our local economy, has generated property damage, and inflicted serious environmental destruction up and down our coastline.

Recent news reports provided compelling evidence that the largest oil spill in the region in three decades could have started earlier than reported. This is concerning as prompt detection of a pipeline failure is essential to minimizing impacts to the community, our local ecosystems and economy. Constituents who live along the shoreline have dealt with tar balls, strong odors, and oiled birds appearing across our local beaches. We are also highly concerned about potential long term health effects. Our economy depends on the millions of tourists who visit Orange County, and our beaches are our lifeblood.

Reports continue to show that this spill may have occurred due to an anchor or chain of a vessel hitting the pipeline and dragging it along the seafloor. The pipe “may also have been struck several other times by other ships’ anchors,” according to the latest reporting.

The citizens of Orange County deserve a fully transparent investigation and up to date information. This includes investigating the responsible party’s response to this tragic spill, the cause of the spill, and any failures from responsible federal agencies. Recently, it has been reported pipelines off the coast of Orange County may have been charted incorrectly or moved due to incident. We join Rep. Steel and others in requesting your Administration immediately survey the seabed off the Orange County coast, update nautical charts and provide clear and

undisputed maps of all pipeline placements linked to offshore oil platforms. Lack of action will continue to have irreversible destructive impacts on our community and wildlife.

Orange County is still recovering for the unprecedented international COVID-19 pandemic. Local hospitals, theme parks, financial institutions, retail establishments, hotels, & small businesses rely on our tourism-based economy. The local economy has done its best to persevere through the pandemic and now must face a major environmental disaster.

As elected officials in Orange County, we join support of Rep. Michelle Steel's October 14, 2021, call to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator and to the Commandant of the Coast Guard, urging your Administration to immediately survey nautical charts off the coast of Orange County to ensure the exact pipeline placements. We also urge the Administration to act to clear the backlog of ships along our coastline that continue to endanger our communities.

Sincerely,

/s/
Kim Carr
Mayor
City of Huntington Beach

/s/
Andrew Do
Chairman
Board of Orange County
Supervisors

/s/
Patricia Bates
Senator
State of California

/s/
Barbara Delgleize
Mayor Pro-Tem
City of Huntington Beach

/s/
Katrina Foley
Supervisor, 2nd District
Board of Orange County
Supervisors

/s/
Laurie Davies
Assemblywoman
State of California

/s/
Erik Peterson
Councilman
City of Huntington Beach

/s/
Donald P. Wagner
Supervisor, 3rd District
Orange County Board of
Supervisors

/s/
Peter Blake
Councilman
City of Laguna Beach

/s/
Lisa Bartlett
Supervisor, 5th District
Orange County Board of
Supervisors

/s/
The City of Newport
Beach

/s/
The City of Laguna Niguel

/s/
The City of Seal Beach